



# Agricultural Leaders OF MICHIGAN

## **Testimony on H.B. 5432: Submitted on June 4, 2014**

The Agricultural Leaders of Michigan would like to express our opposition to H.B. 5432, which would expand the definition of “domestic animal” to include “those species of animals that live under the husbandry of humans.” This bill would encourage the spread of invasive species of hogs that endanger the public health, Michigan’s agriculture industry, our natural resources, and the property of businesses and homeowners across the state.

In addition, it seems premature to consider a bill of this nature while there is ongoing litigation to determine if the Invasive Species Order will stand.

This bill is an attempt to undermine the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Invasive Species Order outlawing non-native swine. This bill would allow the possession and breeding of invasive non-native species, as long as they are being raised by humans. Unfortunately, animals sometimes escape and no fencing system is 100 percent effective.

If this bill passes, it will reverse the DNR invasive species order and allow the unchecked spread of invasive swine in Michigan which has the potential to cause devastating economic losses for Michigan agriculture. It will also create serious problems for our natural resources and wildlife and put the health and property of Michigan residents in danger.

The DNR Invasive Species Order targets non-native species such as the Eurasian and Russian wild boar and crosses produced from these breeds. These non-native hogs are fast-breeding, voracious and destructive animals with no natural predators in Michigan. They dig up fields, destroy important crops, endanger livestock, threaten our wildlife and natural resources, and cause billions of dollars in damages to property.

They also carry diseases, such as pseudorabies and bovine tuberculosis, that can wipe out livestock and our natural wildlife, as well as harmful bacteria such as brucellosis that can seriously sicken human beings.

We strongly oppose H.B. 5432 because it poses a serious risk to Michigan agriculture, the public health, our natural resources and our economy.

### **About the Agricultural Leaders of Michigan**

Agricultural Leaders of Michigan is a coalition of agricultural, commodity and agribusiness leaders committed to promoting Michigan agriculture, participating in the ongoing dialogue about issues affecting our state, and harnessing agriculture’s power and potential to further grow Michigan’s economy.

Members of ALM include: Greenstone Farm Credit Services, Michigan Agri-Business Association, Michigan Allied Poultry Industries, Michigan Corn Growers Association, Michigan Milk Producers Association, Michigan Pork Producers Association, Michigan Soybean Association and Potato Growers of Michigan.